

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the fourth sentence of the first full paragraph on page 10 as follows:

--In this manner, the outer nose piece 32 can provide electrical continuity between the tube 13 and the second jaw 16, while the inner nose piece 34 31 can provide electrical continuity between the pushrod 22 and the first jaw 15.—

Please add the following paragraph after the first full paragraph on page 10:

--It is envisioned that pushrod 22 and/or conductive tube 13 function as means for connecting jaw members 15, 16 to a source of electrosurgical energy such that opposable sealing surfaces 39, 40 are capable of conducting electrosurgical energy through tissue held therebetween.--

Please add the following paragraph after the first full paragraph on page 11:

--It is envisioned that ratchet 60 and/or grooves 62 function as means for maintaining a closure force in the range of about 3 kg/cm² to about 16 kg/cm² between opposable sealing surfaces 39, 40.--

Please add the following paragraph after the Claims of the application:

--ABSTRACT

--A laparoscopic bipolar electrosurgical instrument for sealing tissue is disclosed. The instrument includes a handle having an elongated tube, and first and second jaw members attached to a distal end of the tube. The jaw members are movable from a first position for approximating tissue to at least one subsequent position for grasping tissue therebetween. Each of the jaw members includes an electrically conductive

sealing surface. The instrument also includes means for connecting the jaw members to a source of electrosurgical energy, a stop for maintaining a minimum separation distance, and means for maintaining a closure force. The means for connecting includes a pushrod for connecting the first jaw member to a source of electrosurgical energy.--